Design Resource

Cane and Bamboo-Allahabad

The Craft of Cane and Bamboo Furniture Making

by
Prof. Bibhudutta Baral, J. Antony William and Anushree Kumar
NID, Bengaluru

Source:
https://dsource.in/resource/cane-and-bamboo-allahabad

1. Introduction
2. Tools and Raw Materials
3. Making Process
4. Products
5. Contact Details

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Introduction

Allahabad in Uttar Pradesh is well known for its cane and bamboo work. Cane and Bamboo are the most commonly used materials to make furniture and house hold items which are essential for daily life. Artisans in Allahabad deliver high quality work through their products. Furniture frame is made with thick bamboo by heating, bending and joining. Finally, the frame is rounded with thin processed cane called 'Gola'. The tradition of cane and bamboo work started nearly 40 to 50 years back and carried from older generations to younger generations. Nearly 10 to 20 families engaged in producing cane and bamboo furniture. The artisans of Allahabad have their own distinct style of creating intricate designs. The motif patterns are created with their own imaginative idea and skill without using any traced design. The final products are produced to cater to the local need. The artisans get chance to display the products in Shilp melas and craft melas. Assam, Manipur, Nagaland, Tripura and Arunachal Pradesh are the major cultivators of bamboo and producers of cane and bamboo products. Kanpur and Bareilly in Uttar Pradesh, Kerala, Hyderabad, Allahabad, are the some other places known for Cane and Bamboo work.

The skilled artisan making bamboo furniture.

Hard bamboo is burned/heated to get the required shape.

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Thin processed cane is flexible to create patterns.

Cane is cut as per the dimensions of bamboo frame.

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Processed cane is being bounded over bamboo frame.

The final product.

Closer view of detailed weaving.

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Tools and Raw Materials

Raw materials: In Allahabad, Furniture is made using bamboo as it is flexible.

Bamboo: The natural eco-friendly material is procured from Kolkata as it is the major producer of bamboo in the eastern region of India.

Chadi: Thin cane is bought from Gorakhpur.

Mota Cane: Thicker cane is from Assam.

Patri: It is the processed cane skin which is used for binding.

Gola: It is the thin processed cane used to round/bind the bamboo frame. This is imported from Malaysia.

List of tools:

- **Hatoda:** Hammer is used during furniture making to pierce the nails.
- **Cutter:** Its used to cut the thin cane.
- **Jamura:** Its the tool used to pull the cane.
- **Mungri:** A wooden tool used to bend and shape the bamboo.
- **Chaaku:** Knife used to scrap the burned bamboo skin to make the texture smooth.
- **Talwar:** Another type of knife used to smoothen and beautify the bamboo texture.
- **Kerosene Lamp:** Its used to heat the bamboo.
- **Tape:** Its made out of bamboo split is used for measurement during furniture making process.
- **Hacksaw:** Its used to cut the bamboo.

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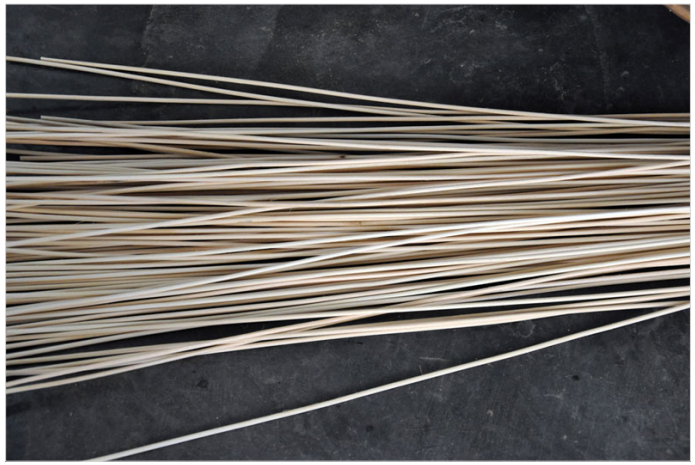
Procured bamboo is stored at room temperature.

Processed cane skin used to combine/bind the different parts of chair.



Jamura is the tool used to pull the cane.

Cutter used to cut the cane.

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Mungri used in shaping process.

Hacksaw used to cut the dry bamboo.

Chaaku used to smoothen the surface.

Jamura is the tool used to pull the cane while weaving.

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Local made scale made out of bamboo for measurement.

Hammer for hammering.

Another type of Chaaku (knife).

A metal rod used to bend the bamboo while heating/ burning the bamboo stick.

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Kerosene burner used to produce the fire.

A collage of all tools used in production process.

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Making Process

The production of furniture involves different stages such as frame making with bamboo, polishing and rounding with processed thin cane. Cane and bamboo furniture making stars by cutting the lengthy bamboo sticks into required size. The bamboo is then immersed in water for 2 hours to absorb the moisture. Now the bamboo stick is heated using kerosene lamp and it is bent as per the desired shape. Shaping is done with the help of wooden tool called Mungri locally. The other parts of furniture are joined tightly by binding using thin cane strips. Now the different ends of the article are nailed. Thus the frame of the article is made and it is polished with sand paper to obtain smooth texture. The thin cane is soaked in water until it attains moisture. Then it is cut into different sizes as per the size of the bamboo frame. The cane is wrapped around the bamboo frame by weaving. This process of rounding is locally called as binayi. The ends of the cane are joined using small iron nails. The artisan creates simple motif patterns while weaving the cane.

Bamboo sticks are soaked in water for 2 hours.

Heated bamboo is easy to bend.

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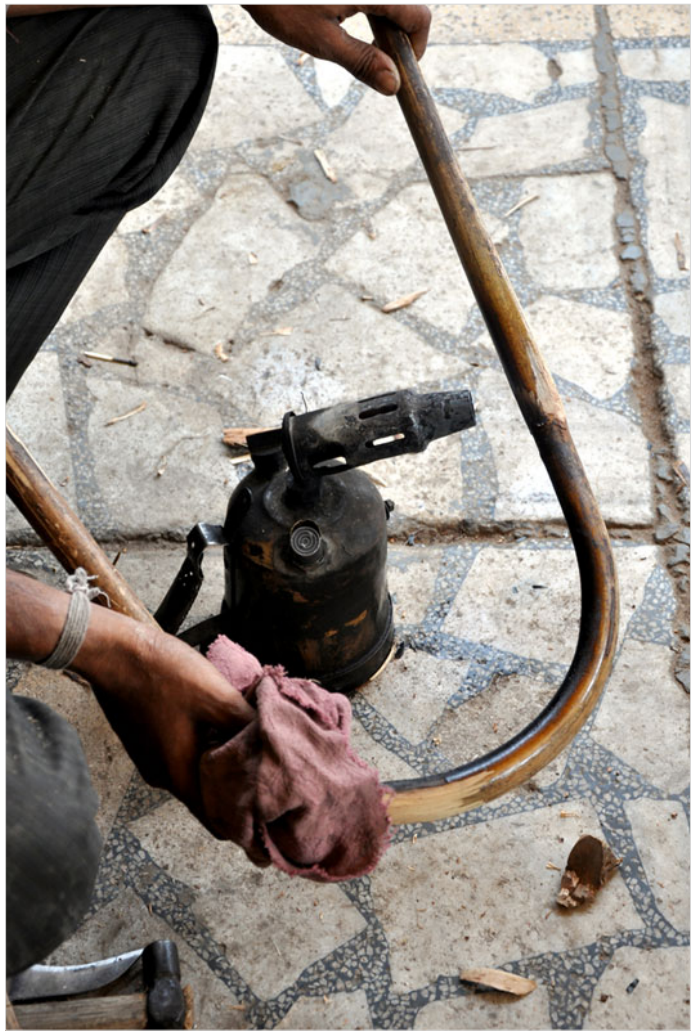

Artisan applying the pressure on the bamboo stick for initial shaping while using the burner for the purpose.

Proper shaping is obtained by shaping with Mungri.

Measuring the Surai (motif name of shaped bamboo) to get accurate shape.

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The burnt skin layer is removed and smoothened.

The parts are joined using thin cane strip.

Ends are nailed.

The bamboo frame is ready for cane rounding.

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Cane is cut into different sizes.

Initial joining of cane to the frame.

Craftsman involved in cane weaving.

Cane joined to the bamboo with thin small nails.

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Skilled artisan creates design pattern while weaving.

Adding mota cane (thick cane) to the furniture for better support.

Chair with beautiful design pattern on it.

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Products

Cane and bamboo products are very strong, durable and eco-friendly. It is strong because bamboo is used in the body structure while the cane is used in binding as well as weaveing the seating part of the furniture. The rich quality products include sofas, chairs, racks, tables and swing chairs. The cane weaved sofa set and chairs are remarkable among all the products. The attractive intricate design patterns are admirable for their uniqueness. The motifs are created innovatively. Surahi – matka shape design that the artisans make for the back of the chair is one of the popular motifs available in the market. Another interesting thing about the cane and bamboo furniture of Allahabad is that the cane weaving around the bamboo frame is done in such a way that the frame which is inside cannot be seen from outside.

The displayed chairs at market place in Allahabad.

Sofa set in unique form.

The cane and bamboo furniture is also decorated using dyed cane.

Bamboo swing chair displayed in market.

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A simple bamboo chair.

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This documentation was done by Prof. Bibhudutta Baral, J. Antony William and Anushree Kumar at NID, Bengaluru.

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